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physics); Professor Easterfield, of Wellington, N. Z. (chemistry); Professor Skeats, of Melbourne (geology and mineralogy); Mr. Charles Hedley, of Sydney (biology); Mr. A. H. S. Lucas, of Sydney (geography); Mr. A. G. Hamilton, of Wellington, N. Z. (ethnology and anthropology); Mr. G. H. Knibbs, of Melbourne (social and statistical science); Mr. H. W. Potts, of the Hawkesbury College (agriculture); Professor R. W. Chapman, of Adelaide (engineering and architecture); Dr. J. Mason, of Wellington, N. Z. (sanitary science and hygiene); Mr. Peter Board, of Sydney (mental science and education). The acting permanent secretary, Mr. J. H. Maiden, can be addressed at the office of the association, Royal Society's House, Sydney, and will be glad to give further particulars and to enroll members for New South Wales.

Nature states that a movement, supported by the Linnean Society of New South Wales, is on foot to approach the Australian government with the object of having Barrow Island, sixty miles off the northwest coast, set apart as a fauna reserve. The island, which is remarkable for its kangaroo, bandicoot, rat, and wren, none of which occurs on the mainland, is likely to be leased for sheep-farming, to the detriment of the fauna. The policy of the Crown's retention of islands as sanctuaries for wild life is being amply justified by the experiences of New Zealand and the United States, and the Barrow Island fauna is worth effort to save.

THE MORLEY CHEMICAL LABORATORY OF WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

THE open weather of the fall and winter has made it possible to push more rapidly the construction of the new Morley Chemical Laboratory of Western Reserve University. This building, which will house the departments of chemistry and geology of both undergraduate departments of the university, is situated upon the Adelbert College campus. It will provide accommodations sufficient for three hundred students in chemistry and one hundred and fifty students in geology.

The building is collegiate gothic in style, is

built of brick and concrete, with Indiana limestone trimmings, and is of fire-proof construction. It is three stories in height. The first floor will contain two large laboratory rooms, recitation rooms, offices, small research laboratory, dark rooms, a workshop and storeroom. On the second floor there will be two large laboratories, the main lecture room, with preparation room adjoining, a storage room, a small laboratory, balance room and offices. The third floor will be largely devoted to the department of geology, which department will occupy a large lecture room, a laboratory for students, a private laboratory, offices and a storeroom. This floor will provide, also, additional recitation rooms, library and reading room and a small laboratory for electrochemistry for the department of chemistry. The laboratory building will cost one hundred and twenty thousand dollars and will be ready for occupancy in September, 1909.

The library of the department of chemistry will include the Morley collection of books on chemistry. These books were assembled by Professor Morley during his years of active association with Western Reserve and were given by him to the university. These books are now being reclassified and recatalogued.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

THE regents of the University of Wisconsin, in accordance with the recommendation of the State Timber Land Owners' Association and the Wisconsin Conservation Commission, proposed to the United States government to provide a suitable building on the university campus for the use of the U. S. Forestry Service as a laboratory for the investigation of problems connected with the utilization of forest products. The proposed building will cost \$30,000, and will be furnished with heat, light, and power by the university. The U. S. Forest Service desires to concentrate at some engineering college in the west all of its present laboratories. The purpose is to carry on an elaborate series of investigations upon all kinds of timber, with reference to adapting each to its best use, and to utilizing timber, stumps and refuse now wasted. The utilization of the by-products of the logging

operations, the making of wood pulp from various kinds of timber, the distillation of turpentine and other products of wood waste, and similar problems are to be included in the forestry work. The United States government will equip the proposed building at a cost of \$14,000, and will provide the entire staff of investigators, whose salaries will aggregate \$28,000 a year. The laboratory is to be available for advanced university students and instructors in forestry and chemical engineering. The scientific men provided by the forestry service for the laboratory are to give lectures in the university.

THE University of Chicago gives the first two years of the medical curriculum of Rush Medical College, which is affiliated with the university. In order to encourage the spirit and method of investigation among students preparing to study medicine, the university offers three scholarships for the session of 1909-10, to be awarded to applicants presenting the best theses embodying the results of independent investigation in any of the sciences fundamental to medicine—physics, chemistry, or any of the biological sciences. The first prize will be a scholarship for three quarters (\$180), the second prize a scholarship for two quarters (\$120), and the third prize a scholarship for one quarter (\$60). This competition is open to members of the graduating class or graduate students of this college. Theses must be sent to the dean of medical courses, The University of Chicago, on or before April 1, 1909.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made at Lehigh University to keep the conference department open during the Christmas recess. This department, composed of instructors of the university under the direction of one of the professors, is designed to assist students who find difficulty with their current work. It is an innovation in college policy, which is said to have proved a great help since its establishment last September.

By a resolution of the senate of the University of London, it has been decided to ask the government to appoint a royal commission with a view to the introduction of a bill to

secure incorporation of the Imperial College of Science and Technology with the University.

WE are informed that the note given prominence by the New York papers and reprinted in *SCIENCE* to the effect that Governor Johnson had asked President Roosevelt to accept the presidency of the University of Minnesota is incorrect.

DR. ADAM SEDGWICK, professor of zoology at Cambridge, and fellow at Trinity College, has accepted a professorship of zoology at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London.

At the University of Glasgow, Dr. Cecil H. Desch, of University College, London, has been appointed to the Graham Young lectureship in metallurgical chemistry to succeed Dr. C. E. Fawsitt, who resigned to accept the newly-established chair of chemistry in the University of Sidney, N. S. W.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE "PINCH-EFFECT" IN UNIDIRECTIONAL ELECTRIC SPARKS

PROFESSOR NIPHER has recently described¹ some interesting experiments on momentum effects in electric discharge, and writes as follows concerning the unidirectional sparks obtained by the insertion into the circuit of strips of cloth moistened with a saline solution:

. . . the sparks are large and brilliant at the negative end in both positive and negative lines, and thin out towards the positive end. The negative terminals are large spheres of about 10 cm. diameter. The positive terminals are small knobs, of about 1 cm. diameter. *While on the large sphere the electrons repel each other. But when they start into motion across the spark-gap, they attract each other electromagnetically.* This appears to be the reason why the spark thins out as the electrons proceed in their motion across the spark-gap. [The italics are mine.]

According to theory, two like charges repelling each other when at rest, begin to develop an electromagnetic attraction for each other as soon as they are put in motion in the same direction. But this attraction does not be-

¹ *SCIENCE*, December 4, 1908, p. 807.